



**ALICE'S JOURNEY AS A DREAMING FORM OF ANXIETIES
TOWARDS ADULTHOOD IN *ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN
WONDERLAND* BY LEWIS CARROLL**

A FINAL PROJECT

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
S-1 Degree Majoring in English Department
Faculty of Humanities Diponegoro University**

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SEMARANG**

2019

PRONOUNCEMENT

The writer truthfully confirms that he compiles this final project by himself and without taking any results from other researchers in S-1, S-2, and S-3 and in diploma degree of any university. The writer also ascertains that he did not quote or take any material from other publications or someone's paper except for the references mentioned.

Semarang, June 2019

Aldi Imam Fahrizal

MOTTO AND DEDICATION

*To see a world in a grain of sand, and a
heaven in a wildflower. Hold infinity in the
palm of your hand, and eternity in an hour.*

— **William Blake, Auguries of Innocence**

*You're only given a little spark of madness. You
mustn't lose it.*

— **Robin Williams**

*This final project is dedicated to
my family.*

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Praise be to God Almighty, who has given strength and spirit so this final project on “Alice’s Journey as a Dreaming Form of Anxieties in *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll” comes to a completion. On this occasion, the writer would like to thank all those people who have contributed to the completion of this research report.

The deepest gratitude and appreciation are extended to Dr. Ratna Asmarani, M.Ed, M.Hum, the writer’s final project advisor who has given her continuous guidance, helpful correction, support, advice and suggestion, without which it is doubtful that this essay comes into completion. The writer’s deepest gratitude also goes to the following persons:

1. The writer’s beloved parents, Adang Suryana and Ina Herlina, for giving their continuous support, love, and patience.
2. Dr. Nurhayati, M.Hum., as the Dean of Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University.
3. Dr. Agus Subiyanto, M.A., as the Head of the English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University.
4. All of the lecturers in the English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University for their sincere dedication and guidance.
5. All of the staff of Faculty of Humanities.

6. The writer's colleagues and best friends: Dhianika Bhayangkara, Richie Adi Syahputra, Abdul Rohim Indra, Adityo Widhi Nugroho, Ulin Nuha Al-Haris, Muhammad Faisal Hira, Muhammad Abirzaim Veraldy, Erzal Pratomo Kurnianto, Rizal Yunianto, Risky Hendra, Rifqi Adzani, Muhammad Saiq Hussein, Hilman Rasyid, Genjit, Kurniawan Adi Wicaksono, Septyan Adi Prabowo.

The writer realizes that this final project is still far from perfection. Thus, he will be glad and thankful to receive any constructive criticisms and recommendation to make this final project better. Finally, the writer expects that this final project will be useful to the reader who wishes to learn something about dream works and dream analysis.

Semarang, June 2019

Aldi Imam Fahrizal

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ABSTRAK

Makalah ini dibuat untuk menganalisis bagaimana perjalanan karakter Alice selama di Wonderland dalam novel Alice's Adventures in Wonderland karya Lewis Carroll dapat menyimbolkan kegelisahan pada diri Alice dalam memandang beberapa aspek kehidupan dewasa di dunia nyata. Makalah ini dibuat menggunakan teori psikoanalisis, terutama teori analisis mimpi (Dream Analysis) milik Sigmund Freud, untuk menganalisa arti dari kejadian-kejadian yang dialami Alice selama berada di Wonderland, dan juga arti dari pertemuan Alice dengan makhluk-makhluk yang menghuni didalamnya. Untuk menganalisis data yang disajikan, penulis menggunakan riset perpustakaan dan metode kontekstual. Setelah melakukan analisis, hasil yang didapatkan adalah perjalanan tokoh utama, Alice selama di Wonderland sebagai representasi kegelisahan tokoh Alice terhadap beberapa aspek masa dewasa, yaitu kegelisahan terhadap identitas, pengasingan, upacara kelas sosial, dan kekuasaan otoritatif yang absurd.

Kata kunci: psikoanalisis, analisis mimpi, kegelisahan, karakter, simbol.

ABSTRACT

This paper is made to analyze how the journey of Alice in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* symbolizes Alice's anxieties towards aspects of real-life adulthood. This paper is made using Psychoanalysis theory, particularly using Sigmund Freud's theory of dream analysis, to analyze meanings behind the events experienced by Alice throughout her journey in Wonderland, and meanings behind her encounter with the residents of Wonderland. In order to analyze the data, the writer uses library research and contextual method. The result shows the journey of the main character, Alice in Wonderland as a representation of Alice's anxieties towards aspects of adulthood, such as anxiety towards identity, alienation, social class ceremony, and absurd authoritative power.

Keywords: psychoanalysis, dream analysis, anxiety, character, symbol.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of Study

According to Daryl Worthington on www.newhistorian.com, the novel *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll, when first published in 1865, received negative reviews from many critics and readers alike, stating the book to be sheer nonsense. However, over times *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* has gained recognition not just as a novel of nonsensical fairy tale to add for children's bedtime stories collection, but also as a piece of classic literature. Bearing Carroll's satirical social message, distinguished and sophisticated logic through pure fantasy. In the writer's opinion, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is a very form of classic literary nonsense for adult readers.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland is a novel which can be read through different lenses, resulting in different interpretations as to what the story in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* really means. Therefore, the writer is interested to interpret and analyze the story of Alice in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* as a form of anxiety dream.

1.2. Scope of Study

The writer focuses on analyzing the two intrinsic aspects of the novel, namely the character aspect and conflict aspect. As for the extrinsic aspect, the writer uses Sigmund Freud's theory of dream analysis to interpret the story of the novel as a symbolic dream that represents Alice's anxieties towards certain aspects in real-life adulthood.

1.3. Research Problems

There are several problems that can be found throughout the novel. The problems are listed as follows:

1. What form of anxieties do Wonderland and all its inhabitants represent on Alice's view towards aspects of real-life adulthood?
2. How does Alice react to the challenges presented by Wonderland and all its inhabitants?

1.4. Objectives of Study

The main objectives of study are as listed in order below;

1. To understand the form of anxieties represented by Wonderland and its inhabitants.
2. To explain Alice's behavior in facing the challenges.

1.5. Methods of Study

In this final project, the writer uses library research in a form of close reading, and internet research to collect the data for the analysis. The analysis is presented in a form of qualitative research. The writer uses contextual method to analyze the literary elements of the novel. Contextual method consists of two elements, intrinsic element and extrinsic element. For the intrinsic element, the writer uses character aspect and conflict aspect. For the extrinsic element, the writer uses psychological approach, namely Sigmund Freud's theory of dream analysis.

CHAPTER II

BIOGRAPHY AND SUMMARY

2.1. Biography of the Author

The following biography is adopted from <https://www.biography.com/writer/lewis-carroll>. Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, an English writer widely known by his pseudonym, Lewis Carroll, was born on January 27th, 1832, in the village of Daresbury, England. Carroll was the eldest in a family of 11 children. Carroll was considered in his family as someone who was adept at entertaining himself and his siblings. At age 20, he earned a scholarship from Christ College. Aside from working as a lecturer in mathematics, Carroll was also an avid photographer and wrote essays, political pamphlets and poetry. "The Hunting of the Snark" displays his ability in the genre of literary nonsense.

Carroll had always been considered to have a peculiar connection with children, especially with one Alice Liddell, daughter of Henry George Liddell, the girl who would later become Carroll's main inspiration for his novel entitled *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Carroll often spent many hours with Alice, telling stories from Wonderland. One day, Carroll went to an afternoon picnic with Alice and her sister, it was then Carroll told the first story which would later become *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

2.2. Summary of the Novel

Alice, a 7-year-old girl coming from a wealthy family, is sitting in a park with her sister. Alice then falls asleep and when she wakes up, she sees a talking White Rabbit who is in a rush. She follows the White Rabbit figure through a rabbit hole which leads her into the Wonderland. By the time Alice falls into the rabbit hole she meets a variety of animals and many other odd figures which can talk.

The first character which Alice meets is the White Rabbit. The White Rabbit ironically acts as a guide for Alice throughout her journey in Wonderland. The next character is the Caterpillar. The Caterpillar is a very wise figure who gives advices to Alice in order to survive in Wonderland. The Caterpillar, an unfriendly figure often portrayed smoking a hookah, teaches Alice how to cope with difficult situations which she finds in Wonderland. It shows Alice how to change the size of her body by eating mushrooms so Alice could adapt to the environment. Another major figure Alice meets in Wonderland is the Cheshire Cat. Sometimes the Cheshire Cat disappears leaving nothing but a grin. Alice then meets with the characters called Mad Hatter. Mad Hatter is an odd human figure, he is the leader of one perpetual tea ceremony. The final major character Alice meets in Wonderland is The Queen of Hearts, a foul-tempered, cruel ruler of Wonderland. The Queen despises Alice's rational behavior, as logic does not have its place in Wonderland.

CHAPTER III

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. Intrinsic Aspects

3.1.1. Character

According to Baldick in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*. 2nd ed., a character in terms of fictional works is an individual in a narrative work of arts, mainly in novel, play, television series or film (2001: 37). A character in a literary work may be an embodiment of a certain human traits instead of a whole identity. Often, it is only the main character that is a round character, a character which carries multiple traits, both good and bad, while other characters symbolize a particular trait that works as a support, or a conflict, for the main character's growth.

3.1.2. Internal Conflict

Conflict is a struggle between two or more opposing forces in a play (Holman, 1960: 98). According to Meyer in *The Bedford Introduction to Literature*, internal conflict is a case of moral or psychological issue that must be resolved frequently by the character (1990: 45). Internal conflict is a result of the character's interaction with his/ her surroundings that affects the logic and behavior of the character.

3.2. Extrinsic Aspect

3.2.1. Theory of Dream Analysis

The extrinsic aspects that the writer uses is Sigmund Freud's theory of dream analysis. Dream analysis is used to analyze the challenges that Alice faces in Wonderland, and how they mimic Alice's anxiety towards real-life adulthood. According to Freud in his book *The Interpretation of Dream*, dream is a psychic phenomenon that often works as a fulfilments of wishes (1931: 147).

Also according to Freud in the same book, apart from the theory that dreams can be regarded as a wish fulfillment, there are instances where an individual is having an anxiety dream instead of a wish-fulfilling dream. Anxiety dream is resulted from a repressed stress and emotion in real life, this case happens mostly on children (1931: 160). There are latent and manifest content in a dream. Manifest content is the event that is happening in a dream, and latent content is the hidden meaning that underlies the symbolic event. The latent content may come from the subconscious part of the mind (Freud, 1931: 60). There are several methods of interpreting a dream. One of them is called 'decoding' method, this method uses a fixed 'key' for interpreting the manifest content of a dream. For example, using a the 'dream-book' as a reference, any dream that contains the image of a 'letter' must be interpreted into 'trouble', while any dream that contains the image of a 'funeral' must be interpreted into 'betrothal' (Freud, 1931: 123). 'Decoding' method is later modified into a more complex method that is not dependence to the dream-book, but also takes account the circumstances of the dreamer as well (Freud, 1931: 123).

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS

4.1. Character Analysis

4.1.1. Alice

Alice is depicted as a young English girl with pale white skin, bright blue eyes and shoulder-length blonde hair, she wears a blue Victorian dress throughout her journey in Wonderland. Alice is a daughter of a wealthy British family, she is the younger of the two sisters. In the novel, the character of Alice is described as a girl with a logical yet juvenile way of thinking. At the very beginning of the novel, Alice can be seen as a girl who does not talk much to others. This can be seen by how Alice thinks to herself that the book which her sister reads is dull, rather than saying it to her sister verbally.

Alice often talks about the knowledge she learns from above ground in a way that she understand it. Upon falling into the rabbit hole, Alice tries to determine her position by using the term latitude and longitude, yet she does not exactly know what that means (Carroll, 1865: 6). She also uses her juvenile knowledge to explain the error in Wonderland's nature. For example, when meeting with Cheshire Cat, Alice notices that a cat cannot smile, comparing the error of Wonderland to the knowledge of her own pet cat (Carroll, 1865: 55).

Alice often communicates with herself, whether as a form of advice, or a scold, in third person perspective by 'pretending to be two people' (Carroll, 1865: 10). Coming

from an upper social class, Alice is also a well-mannered girl, shown by how she immediately bow to the figure of a Queen, yet she is also critical to the fact that the Queen is just a card (Carroll, 1865: 70). Alice's discontent for the Queen can also be interpreted as her discontent for the figure of English monarch in real life.

The creation of Wonderland and its various inhabitants shows that Alice is a highly imaginative girl. It is shown by how the Wonderland is inhabited by creatures which are often a result of combination of several animals. Such as the griffon, a half-bird, half-lion creature.

4.2. Internal Conflict Analysis

The internal conflict that occurs within Alice is a result from her interaction with the bizarre nature of Wonderland. Wonderland defies all the knowledge and norms that Alice has learned from real life, the constant challenges often makes Alice rethink her identity and value of her knowledge. For example, when Alice is faced with the challenge to change her heights, she interprets the external stimulus as an attack towards her identity (Carroll, 1865: 37). An internal struggle then occurs within Alice where she has to regain her own identity by comparing herself to her friends and searching for a trait that is only exclusive to her (Carroll, 1865: 14).

4.3. Alice's Journey as A Form of Anxiety Dream

4.3.1. Alice's Anxiety towards Her Identity

The first major anxiety that occurs within Alice is the anxiety towards her own identity, it first occurs when she has to decrease her body size in order go through a small door. Upon changing her size, she realizes that it leads her to another problem, she cannot reach the key on the table needed for opening the door. This predicament triggers Alice's confusion towards her own body.

Alice's doubt towards her own identity peaks when she meets the Caterpillar figure, in which Alice could not even answer a question as simple as "who are you?" (Carroll, 1865: 37). The projection of the character of the Caterpillar is created from Alice's understanding of the concept of metamorphosis. She noted that in time, the Caterpillar will turn into a chrysalis, and then later a butterfly (Carroll, 1865: 37). This concept of metamorphosis mirrors Alice's view of her body constantly changing heights in order to proceed forward. Alice has a fear that the constant changes will erase her of her own identity. This anxiety can be clearly seen when Alice starts doubting herself to the point that she compares herself to other girls of her age in real life, in order to search for a trait that is only exclusive to her (Carroll, 1865: 14). The predicament symbolizes Alice's anxiety towards her own body growth and a search for her own identity.

Later in the story, Alice gradually learns to use the ability to change her height into her own benefit and stop asking questions about how the change of heights defines

her, for example, when she has to shrink her body in order to visit the little house of the Duchess (Carroll, 1865: 45).

4.3.2. Alice's Anxiety towards Alienation

The second major anxiety is Alice's anxiety towards alienation. This anxiety is triggered by the foreign nature of Wonderland as a whole. Wonderland and all its inhabitants serve as a challenge that defies all the knowledge and norms that Alice has learned from above ground. For example, when Alice meets the Duchess, the Duchess can be seen nursing a baby and singing a lullaby, but instead of nursing the baby gently, the Duchess shakes the baby violently at the end of every line which defeats the purpose of singing a lullaby (Carroll, 1865: 50).

Another instance of Alice facing the alien nature of Wonderland's inhabitant is when she meets the Cheshire Cat. The Cheshire Cat is a grinning feline figure. The Cheshire Cat serves as an insight of the alien nature of Wonderland. When Alice meets the Cheshire Cat, the Cat implicitly warns Alice that logic is not welcome in Wonderland, that it is a land of madness, therefore all of its inhabitants are mad, and so does Alice (Carroll, 1865: 53). This implies that in order to survive Wonderland, Alice must accept that she is indeed mad, that her logical way of thinking has no place here, she must change herself, adapt to the bizarre nature of Wonderland.

At one point, when the Cheshire Cat disappears after having a conversation with Alice, she remarks that she often see a cat without a grin, but never a grin without a cat (Carroll, 1865: 55). The line "A cat without a grin" may refer to Alice's familiarity

to Dinah, her pet cat. Dinah is a pet figure that is very close to Alice, a being that Alice sees perhaps almost every day. And the later line “A grin without a cat” refers to the Cheshire Cat, an unfamiliar figure that defies Alice’s understanding of a cat. This may imply that the Cheshire cat is created from Alice’s anxiety towards alienation in real-life, by turning an aspect that is very familiar to Alice into something very foreign. The foreign nature of Wonderland and its inhabitants is a representation of Alice’s fear that upon entering adulthood, she would have to face a world that defies all the logic and knowledge that she has learned, she fears that she will be detached from her surroundings. When faced with this challenge, Alice often tries to use her logic to point the absurd nature of Wonderland and how it should have worked, only for her logic to be denied by the other residents of Wonderland. For example, when remarking that she does not know that a cat could grin, the Duchess simply replies with “You don’t know much” (Carroll, 1865: 49).

4.3.3. Alice’s Anxiety towards Social Class Ceremony

Alice’s anxiety towards social class ceremony, especially towards the occasional tea ceremony that comes with her status as a member of a wealthy British family, is symbolized by the perpetual tea party hosted by the Hatter, or famously known as the Mad Hatter. The Hatter is a male human figure wearing a top hat. In the novel, the character Hatter can be seen conducting a never-ending tea ceremony along with his friends March Hare and Dormouse.

The conversation that occurs during the tea party is often absurd and pointless. For example, at one point, the Hatter asks a riddle ‘why is a raven like a writing-desk?’ in which he later states that he does not know the answer either (Carroll, 1865: 57). This statement from the Hatter marks that the riddle is pointless, it does not have any answer. Therefore its purpose is only to start a conversation that leads to nowhere.

According to the Hatter, he is trapped into a perpetual tea party as a punishment for having a quarrel with Time (Carroll, 1865: 61). The creation of the Hatter comes from Alice’s own view towards an actual English afternoon tea party that is usually held by the wealthy families, hence the Hatter figure wearing a top hat is as a symbol of social class, which may come from Alice’s own way of identifying other members of wealthy families. When first trying to communicate with the Hatter and his friends, Alice is denied of her seat when the trio shouts “No room! No room!” despite the obvious fact that there is enough room (Carroll, 1865: 56). However, upon being rejected, instead of walking away from the tea party, Alice forces her way into the conversation.

The Hatter, his perpetual tea party, and the pointless conversation during the tea party may be interpreted as Alice own juvenile view on how she sees the British tea ceremony as a pointless and dull event. Alice may be anxious that she has to undergo many more ceremonies upon entering her adulthood, seeing that she is a member of a wealthy family and such ceremonies becomes an obligation to her.

4.3.4. Alice's Anxiety towards Absurd Authoritative Power

Alice's anxiety towards authoritative power comes in a figure of The Queen and King of Hearts. The Queen is the ruler of Wonderland. Along with The King of Hearts, The Queen leads an army of cards. The Queen rules the Wonderland with her nonsensical, abstract set of values. When Alice enters the castle garden, she sees two card soldiers are busy painting a white rose into red. When asked by Alice, the soldiers reply that if the Queen finds out that they have planted a white rose instead of a red one, as per the Queen's order, she will behead them (Carroll, 1865: 67). The Queen often abuses her power in order to instill fear into the inhabitants of Wonderland by threatening to execute them over a trivial matter.

Alice's response when she first meets the Queen is to address her properly as a ruler figure, although she often asks herself why she must bow to a pack of cards (Carroll, 1865: 70). Alice grows more annoyed by how often the Queen says the word "Off with their head!", when threatened with the same word, Alice bravely replies with "Nonsense!" (Carroll, 1865: 68). Later in the story, Alice learns from a giant half-bird, half-lion creature called the Gryphon that the Queen is a funny figure since none of the residents of Wonderland that is subject to execution is actually executed (Carroll, 1865: 81). It signifies that the Queen's power lies in an empty threat, her power solely depends on the fear created from the subjects' belief that the execution is real.

The King and Queen of Hearts mirror Alice's view of how absurd and actually fragile the authoritative figures in real-life are, symbolized by the empty threat from the Queen and the appearance of the Queen and King and their army in form of a pack

of cards. At the final chapter of the novel, a trial is held over who steal the Queen's tart. The trial is running absurdly as judgment is passed based on poems, wordplay, and linguistic matters instead of facts and logic (Carroll, 1865: 99). At the trial, Alice is finally able to verbally address the King and Queen as 'nothing but a pack of cards' (Carroll, 1865: 109), signifying Alice utmost discontent on the absurdity and fragility of the Queen and Kings of Heart's power.

CONCLUSION

Sigmund Freud stated that a dream is a form wish-fulfillment, where a wish of an individual presents itself as a latent content inside a dream. But aside from dream as a form of wish-fulfillment, there are instances where a dream can also function as a place where repressed anxiety from real-life takes form as a latent content in a dream. This anxiety dream happens mostly on a children.

Alice's journey in Wonderland in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* can be interpreted as a form of anxiety dream. There are several repressed anxieties Alice feels towards aspects of adulthood that is embodied into the nature and creatures of Wonderland. The constant change of heights and the character Caterpillar represents Alice's anxiety towards her identity, the overall alien nature of Wonderland and the character of Cheshire Cat represents Alice's anxiety towards alienation, the perpetual tea party and the character of Mad Hatter represents Alice's anxiety towards social class ceremony, and the figure of King and Queen of Hearts represents Alice's anxiety towards absurd authoritative figure. Alice is shown to be able to adapt to the challenges presented by the Wonderland and even uses the nature of Wonderland to her own advantage.

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